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RONJE'S
LORY;
KOODOOSRAND.

BY

John F. Sleeper.

Sherwood Press.

1901.

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This Edition

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J. T. Sleeper.

Gift
John T. Sleeper
Jan. 2, 1991



ad 5-19-41

Composed

In Admiration Of The Heroic Daring
Displayed By The

BRAVE FARMERS

Of The Free State And The Vaal
In Unaidedly Resisting The Most Infamous
Oppression.

Of those who stake their lives, their all,
Against tyrannic might,
Content at Freedom's glorious call
To die for Home and Right.

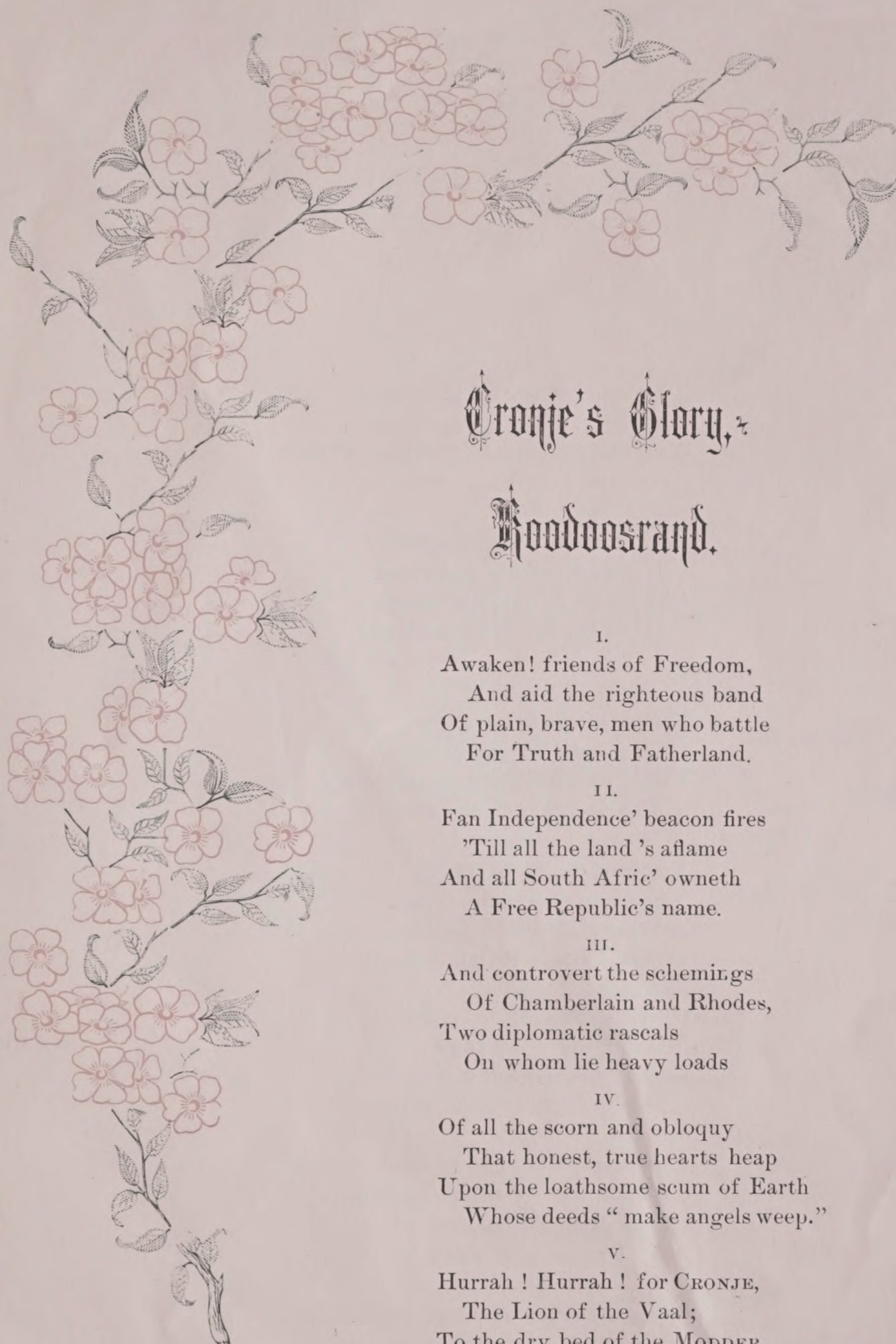


Prefatory Remarks.

This piece was composed during the week subsequent to the glorious defense of Koodoosrand, near Paardeburg, in the Modder drifts, by Gen. **Piet Cronje**; a resistance to barbarous and illegal warfare forever branding with infamy the British name; terminated on February 27, 1900.

Refused by the New York "Journal" and "Herald;" papers hostile to Boer liberty; it first appeared in an abridged form to occupy one column, in the Baltimore "SUN," of Mar. 10, 1900.

A number of typographical errors, naturally incident in setting up the matter of a large daily newspaper then disfigured its text, these have been corrected in this new edition; which is published on the anniversary of the great battle to re-direct attention to the heroic Boer who has suffered on the dreary island where the first Napoleon was persecuted with unabating malice until his melancholy end,—to re-awaken interest in his brave countrymen who are perishing to maintain their rights,—and to again proclaim the everlasting infamy of Chamberlain, Rhodes & Co. to the world



Cronje's Glory,

Goodboosrand.

I.

Awaken! friends of Freedom,
And aid the righteous band
Of plain, brave, men who battle
For Truth and Fatherland.

II.

Fan Independence' beacon fires
'Till all the land 's aflame
And all South Afric' owneth
A Free Republic's name.

III.

And controvert the schemings
Of Chamberlain and Rhodes,
Two diplomatic rascals
On whom lie heavy loads

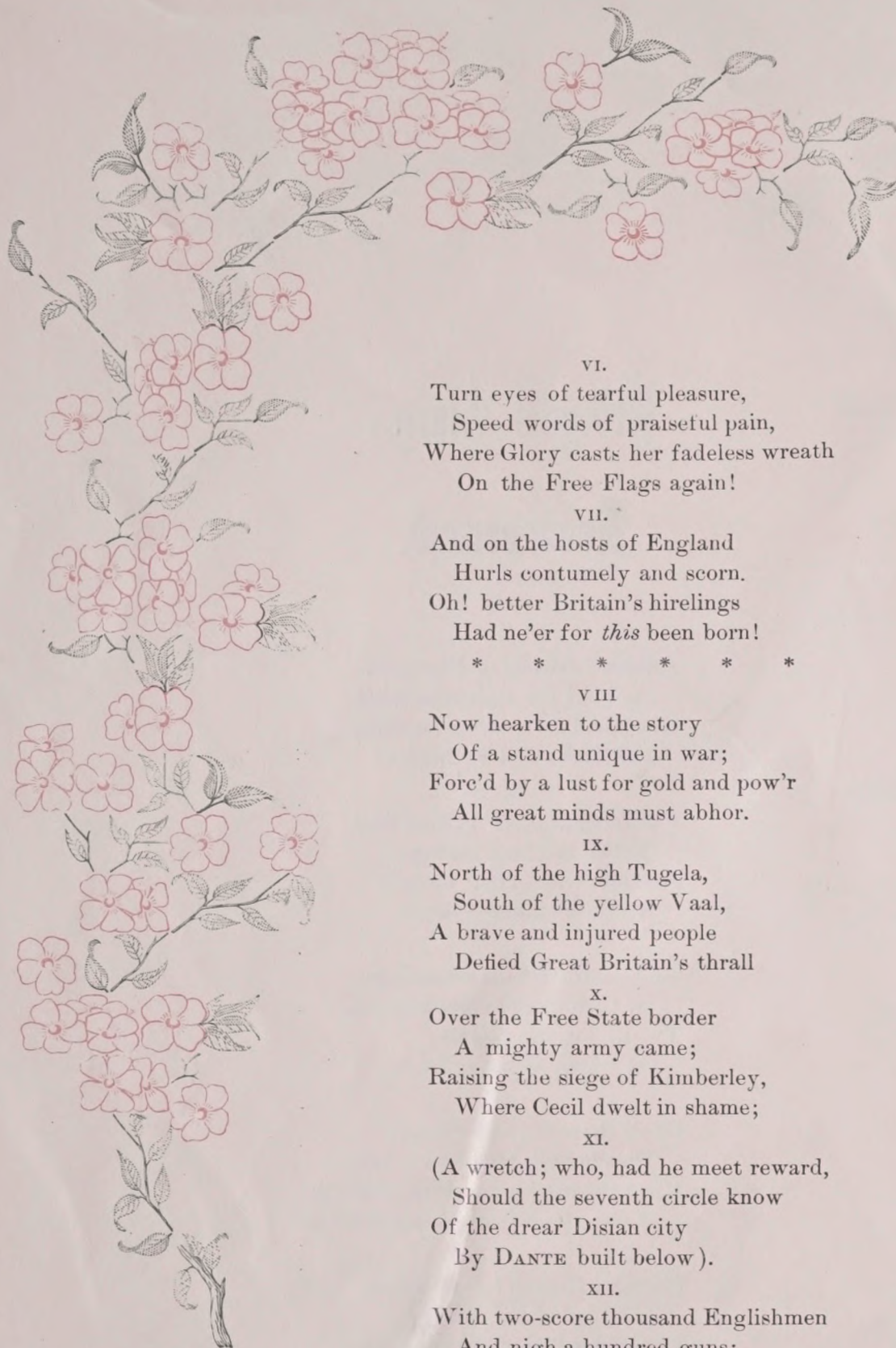
IV.

Of all the scorn and obloquy
That honest, true hearts heap
Upon the loathsome scum of Earth
Whose deeds "make angels weep."

V.

Hurrah ! Hurrah ! for CRONJE,
The Lion of the Vaal;
To the dry bed of the MODDER
Admiring millions shall

I.



VI.

Turn eyes of tearful pleasure,
Speed words of praiseful pain,
Where Glory casts her fadeless wreath
On the Free Flags again!

VII.

And on the hosts of England
Hurls contumely and scorn.
Oh! better Britain's hirelings
Had ne'er for *this* been born!

* * * * *

VIII

Now hearken to the story
Of a stand unique in war;
Fore'd by a lust for gold and pow'r
All great minds must abhor.

IX.

North of the high Tugela,
South of the yellow Vaal,
A brave and injured people
Defied Great Britain's thrall

X.

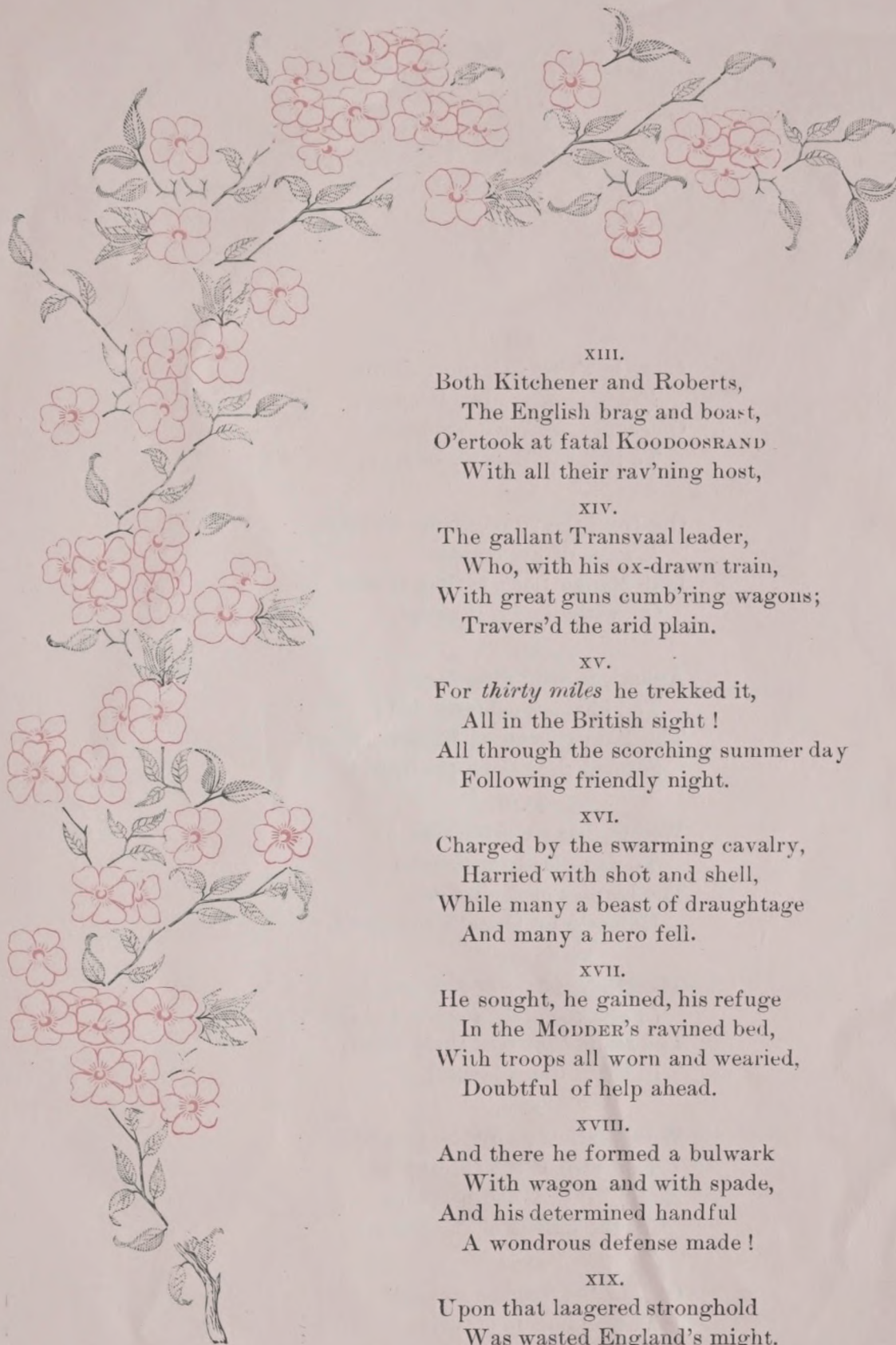
Over the Free State border
A mighty army came;
Raising the siege of Kimberley,
Where Cecil dwelt in shame;

XI.

(A wretch; who, had he meet reward,
Should the seventh circle know
Of the drear Disian city
By DANTE built below).

XII.

With two-score thousand Englishmen
And nigh a hundred guns;
As fleet hounds chase a flying fox
Who safe to covert runs;



XIII.

Both Kitchener and Roberts,
The English brag and boast,
O'ertook at fatal KOODOOSRAND
With all their rav'ning host,

XIV.

The gallant Transvaal leader,
Who, with his ox-drawn train,
With great guns cumb'ring wagons;
Travers'd the arid plain.

XV.

For *thirty miles* he trekked it,
All in the British sight !
All through the scorching summer day
Following friendly night.

XVI.

Charged by the swarming cavalry,
Harried with shot and shell,
While many a beast of draughtage
And many a hero fell.

XVII.

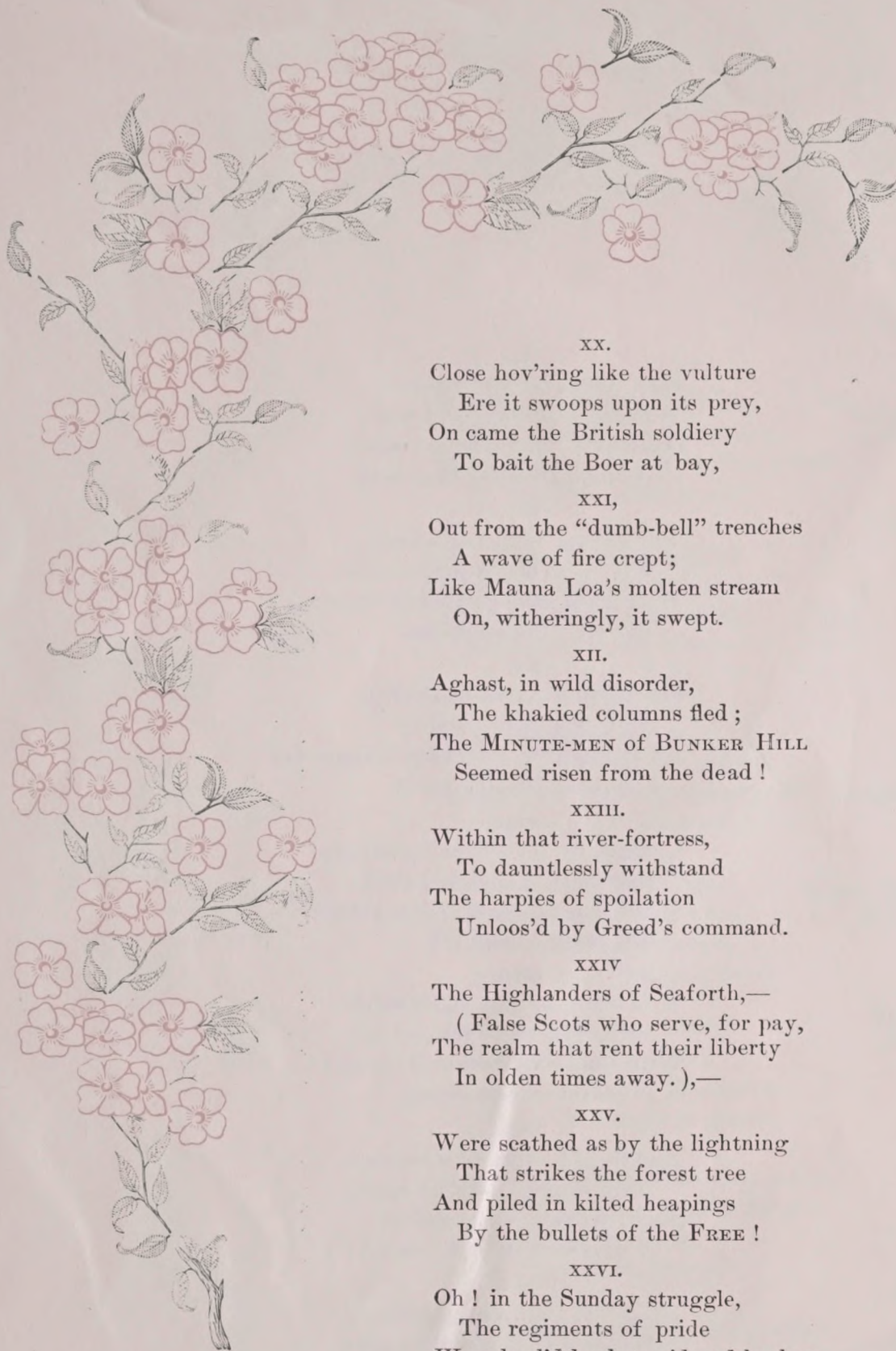
He sought, he gained, his refuge
In the MODDER's ravined bed,
With troops all worn and wearied,
Doubtful of help ahead.

XVIII.

And there he formed a bulwark
With wagon and with spade,
And his determined handful
A wondrous defense made !

XIX.

Upon that laagered stronghold
Was wasted England's might.
Oh! well the patriot burghers
Withstood the narrowing fight,



XX.

Close hov'ring like the vulture
Ere it swoops upon its prey,
On came the British soldiery
To bait the Boer at bay,

XXI,

Out from the "dumb-bell" trenches
A wave of fire crept;
Like Mauna Loa's molten stream
On, witheringly, it swept.

XII.

Aghast, in wild disorder,
The khakied columns fled ;
The MINUTE-MEN OF BUNKER HILL
Seemed risen from the dead !

XXIII.

Within that river-fortress,
To dauntlessly withstand
The harpies of spoilation
Unloos'd by Greed's command.

XXIV

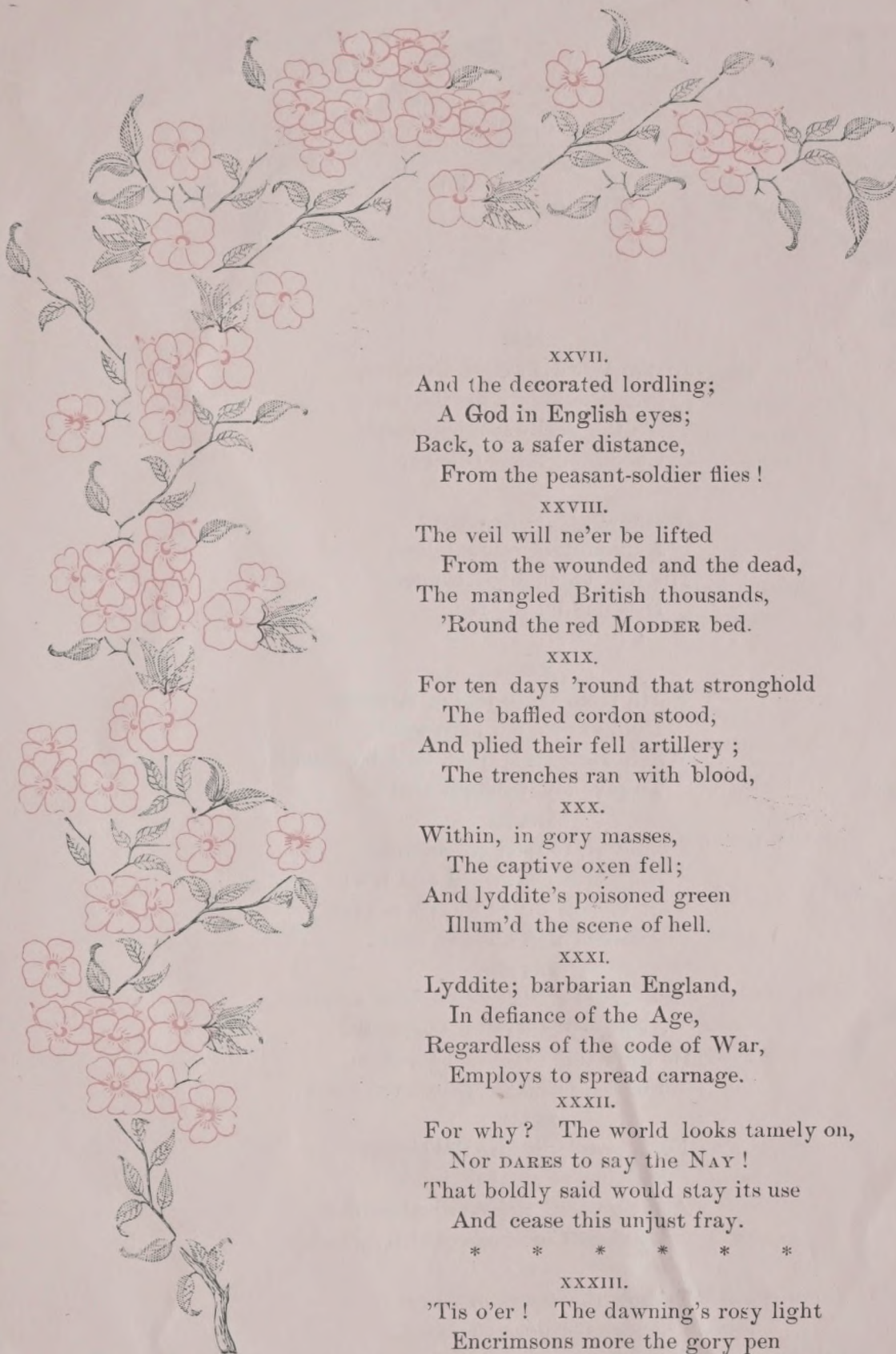
The Highlanders of Seaforth,—
(False Scots who serve, for pay,
The realm that rent their liberty
In olden times away.),—

XXV.

Were scathed as by the lightning
That strikes the forest tree
And piled in kilted heapings
By the bullets of the FREE !

XXVI.

Oh ! in the Sunday struggle,
The regiments of pride
Were hurl'd back toss'd and broken
As seas from the Brison's side.



XXVII.

And the decorated lordling;
A God in English eyes;
Back, to a safer distance,
From the peasant-soldier flies !

XXVIII.

The veil will ne'er be lifted
From the wounded and the dead,
The mangled British thousands,
'Round the red MODDER bed.

XXIX.

For ten days 'round that stronghold
The baffled cordon stood,
And plied their fell artillery ;
The trenches ran with blood,

XXX.

Within, in gory masses,
The captive oxen fell;
And lyddite's poisoned green
Illum'd the scene of hell.

XXXI.

Lyddite; barbarian England,
In defiance of the Age,
Regardless of the code of War,
Employs to spread carnage.

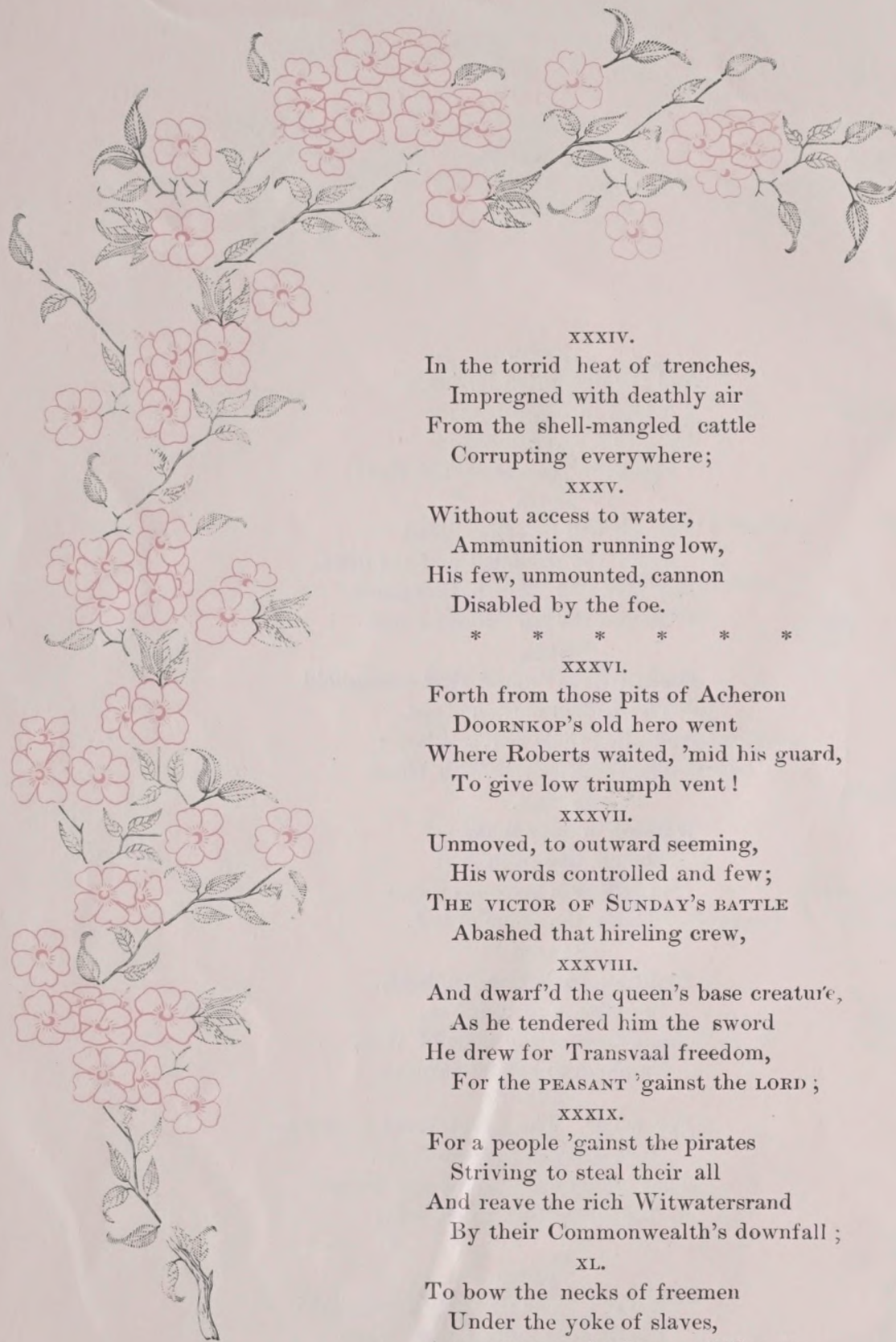
XXXII.

For why? The world looks tamely on,
Nor DARES to say the NAY !
That boldly said would stay its use
And cease this unjust fray.

* * * * *

XXXIII.

'Tis o'er ! The dawning's rosy light
Encrimsons more the gory pen
Where CRONJE fiercely fought at bay,
With his few, brave, heroic men.



XXXIV.

In the torrid heat of trenches,
Impregned with deathly air
From the shell-mangled cattle
Corrupting everywhere;

XXXV.

Without access to water,
Ammunition running low,
His few, unmounted, cannon
Disabled by the foe.

* * * * *

XXXVI.

Forth from those pits of Acheron
DOORNKOP'S old hero went
Where Roberts waited, 'mid his guard,
To give low triumph vent !

XXXVII.

Unmoved, to outward seeming,
His words controlled and few;
THE VICTOR OF SUNDAY'S BATTLE
Abashed that hireling crew,

XXXVIII.

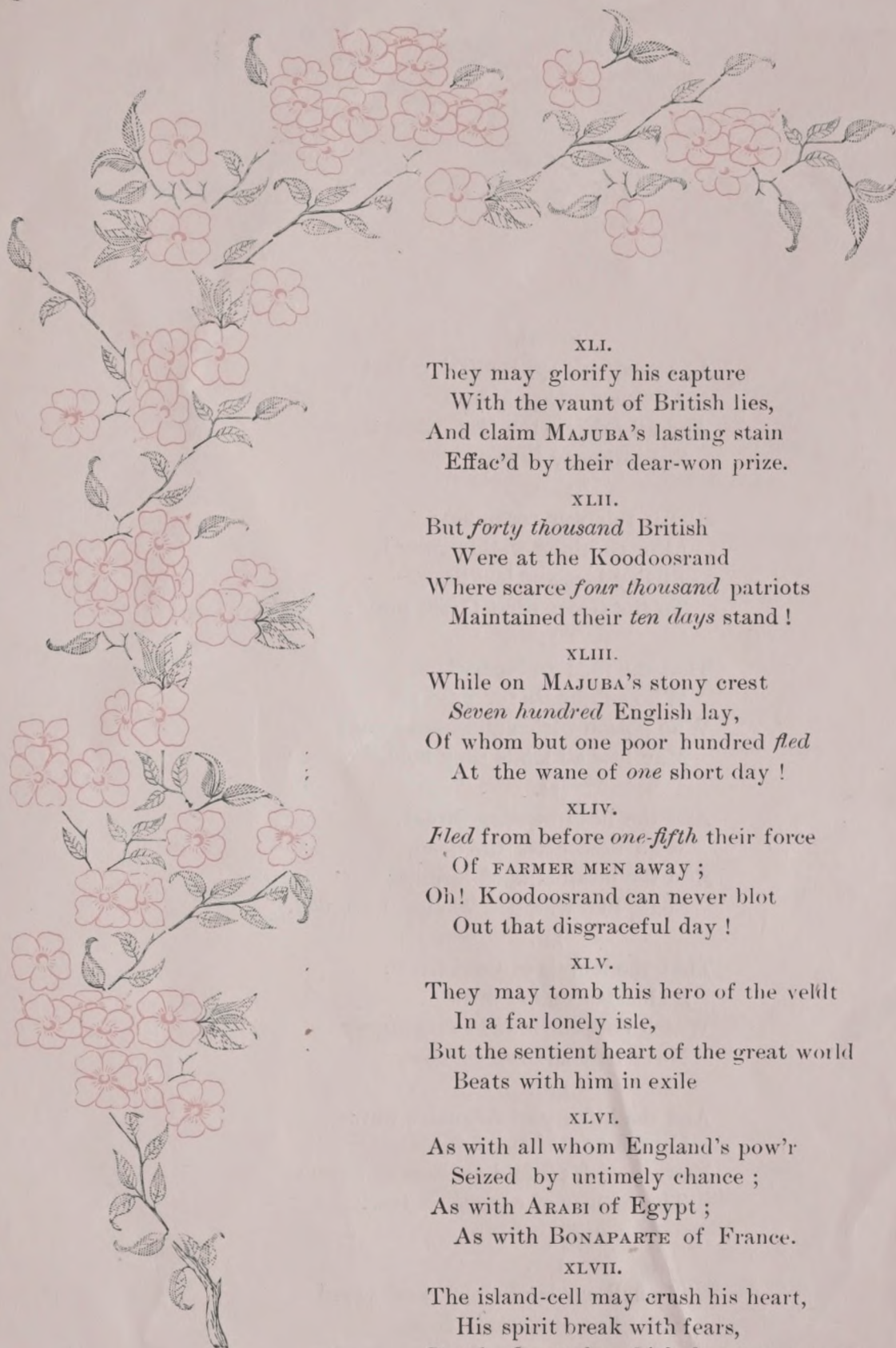
And dwarf'd the queen's base creature,
As he tendered him the sword
He drew for Transvaal freedom,
For the PEASANT 'gainst the LORD ;

XXXIX.

For a people 'gainst the pirates
Striving to steal their all
And reave the rich Witwatersrand
By their Commonwealth's downfall ;

XL.

To bow the necks of freemen
Under the yoke of slaves,
As were wont the "PAGAN" Romans
Ere lived these "CHRISTIAN" knaves !



XLII.

They may glorify his capture
With the vaunt of British lies,
And claim MAJUBA's lasting stain
Effac'd by their dear-won prize.

XLIII.

But *forty thousand* British
Were at the Koodoosrand
Where scarce *four thousand* patriots
Maintained their *ten days* stand !

XLIV.

While on MAJUBA's stony crest
Seven hundred English lay,
Of whom but one poor hundred *fled*
At the wane of *one* short day !

XLV.

Fled from before *one-fifth* their force
Of FARMER MEN away ;
Oh! Koodoosrand can never blot
Out that disgraceful day !

XLVI.

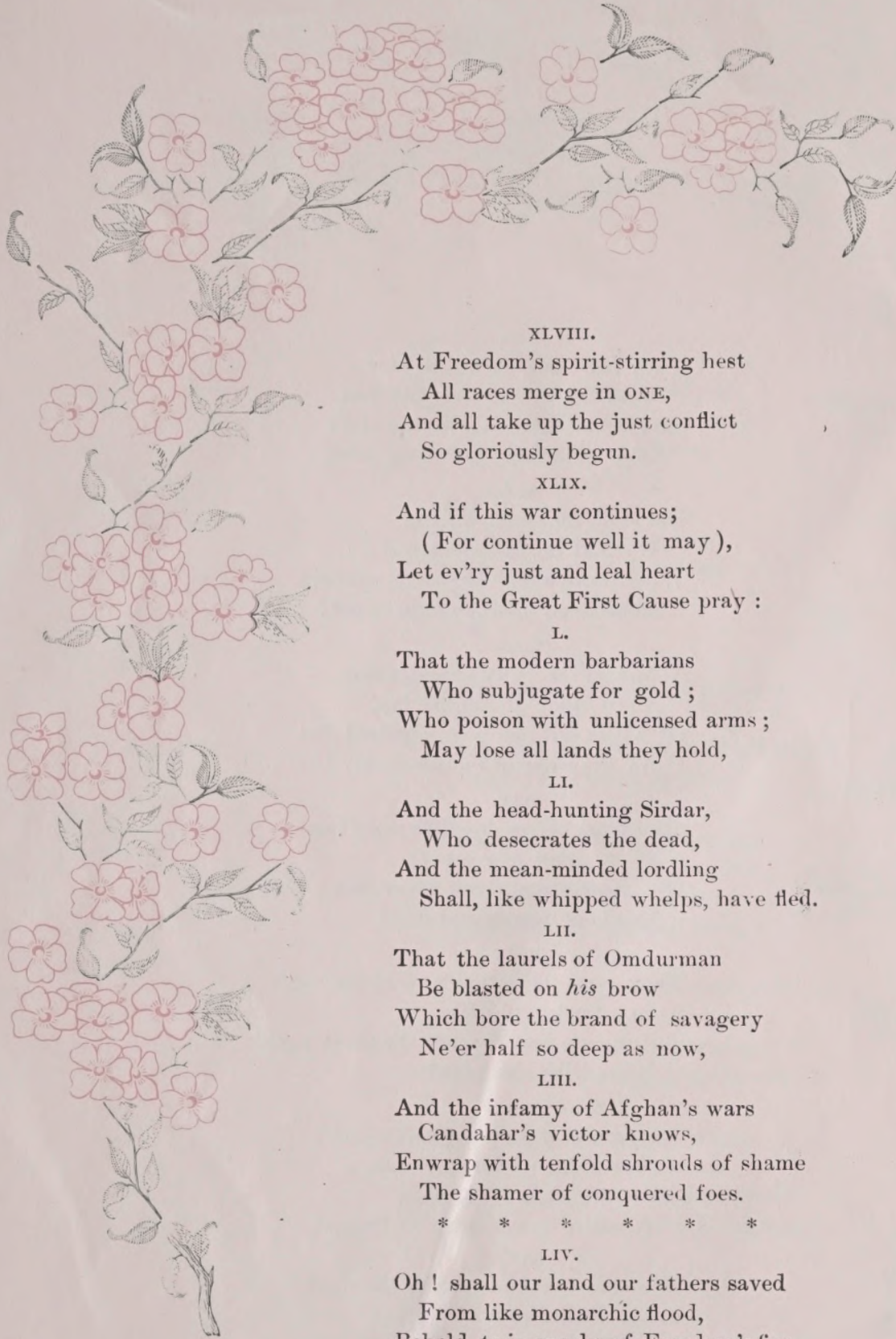
They may tomb this hero of the veldt
In a far lonely isle,
But the sentient heart of the great world
Beats with him in exile

XLVII.

As with all whom England's pow'r
Seized by untimely chance ;
As with ARABI of Egypt ;
As with BONAPARTE of France.

XLVIII.

The island-cell may crush his heart,
His spirit break with fears,
But the CAUSE for which the martyr strove
Advances with the years !



XLVIII.

At Freedom's spirit-stirring hest
All races merge in ONE,
And all take up the just conflict
So gloriously begun.

XLIX.

And if this war continues;
(For continue well it may),
Let ev'ry just and leal heart
To the Great First Cause pray :

L.

That the modern barbarians
Who subjugate for gold ;
Who poison with unlicensed arms ;
May lose all lands they hold,

LI.

And the head-hunting Sirdar,
Who desecrates the dead,
And the mean-minded lordling
Shall, like whipped whelps, have fled.

LII.

That the laurels of Omdurman
Be blasted on *his* brow
Which bore the brand of savagery
Ne'er half so deep as now,

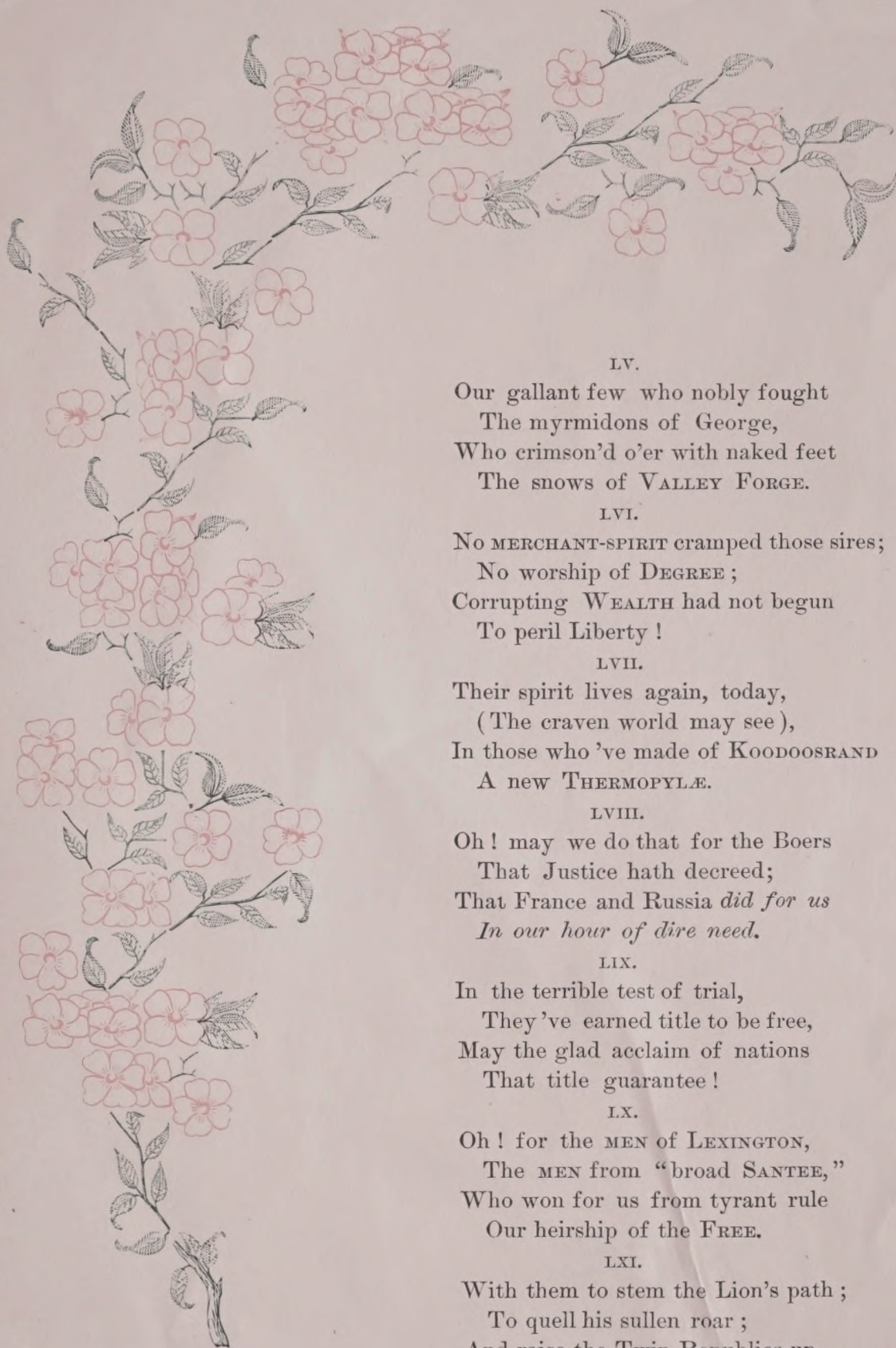
LIII.

And the infamy of Afghan's wars
Candahar's victor knows,
Enwrap with tenfold shrouds of shame
The shamer of conquered foes.

* * * * *

LIV.

Oh ! shall our land our fathers saved
From like monarchic flood,
Behold twin sparks of Freedom's fire
Expire in seas of blood ?



LV.

Our gallant few who nobly fought
The myrmidons of George,
Who crimson'd o'er with naked feet
The snows of VALLEY FORGE.

LVI.

No MERCHANT-SPIRIT cramped those sires;
No worship of DEGREE;
Corrupting WEALTH had not begun
To peril Liberty!

LVII.

Their spirit lives again, today,
(The craven world may see),
In those who've made of KODOOSRAND
A new THERMOPYLÆ.

LVIII.

Oh! may we do that for the Boers
That Justice hath decreed;
That France and Russia *did for us*
In our hour of dire need.

LIX.

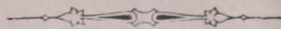
In the terrible test of trial,
They've earned title to be free,
May the glad acclaim of nations
That title guarantee!

LX.

Oh! for the MEN of LEXINGTON,
The MEN from "broad SANTEE,"
Who won for us from tyrant rule
Our heirship of the FREE.

LXI.

With them to stem the Lion's path;
To quell his sullen roar;
And raise the Twin Republics up,
Enfranchised evermore!



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